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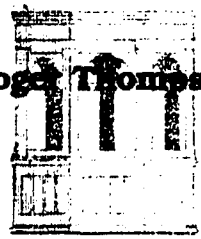
BROWN SHOES, BLACK SHOES AND FELT SLIPPERS: PAROCHIALISM AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE POST-WAR U.S. NAVY

Roger Thompson



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This report examines how intra-service parochialism has affected the United States Navy since the end of the Second World War. It traces the development of naval bureaucratic dominance from the pre-war battleship admirals, through the rise of naval aviators to the eventual dominance by nuclear submariners. The author posits that the Navy may now have entered a new era once again dominated by surface warfare officers and wonders what the consequences of this change may be. The study argues for balance and urges naval leadership to rise above the natural tendency to square the past by primarily promoting the interests of the dominant warfare group.

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BROWN SHOES, BLACK SHOES, AND FELT SLIPPERS:
Parochialism and the Evolution of the Post-War U.S. Navy

As Roger Thompson notes, individuals who belong to large bureaucracies, like the U.S. Navy, have a much easier time identifying with and giving their loyalty to relatively smaller groups. In the Navy's case, this identification is generally with the major warfare communities to which officers belong. This tendency has resulted in some unintended, but very real, consequences for the development of naval warfighting capabilities.

Thompson traces the development of naval bureaucratic dominance from the pre-Second World War battleship admirals, through the rise of naval aviators to the eventual dominance by nuclear submariners. He asks if . . . *From the Sea* has ushered in a new era of surface warfare officer dominance and, if true, wonders what the consequences of this will be.

Although this study argues for balance and urges naval leadership to rise above the natural tendency to square the past by primarily promoting the interests of the CNO's community, it asserts that the surface community has been so neglected in the past that some adjustments are both necessary and inevitable (especially in mine warfare). Finally, it argues that exposing officers to other communities through cross-training is the best way to break the cycle of parochialism that has marked the Navy's post-war history.

Whether or not one agrees with his observations and conclusions, Roger Thompson's study provides an excellent basis for study and discussion.

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BROWN SHOES, BLACK SHOES, AND FELT SLIPPERS: PAROCHIALISM AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE POST-WAR U.S. NAVY

by

Roger Thompson

Roger Thompson is an internationally recognized naval sociologist and military analyst. A former researcher at the Canadian National Defence Headquarters, since 1991 his papers on combat motivation and behavior in naval units have drawn praise from the U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, as well as the Chiefs of Naval Staff of Germany, Spain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. His most recent work on this topic was published in Spanish under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Navy. In 1993, he was awarded *The Admiral's Medallion* by the Commander-In-Chief of the Italian Navy (Admiral Quido Venturoni) for excellence in military research. He currently works as a freelance military affairs writer from his home in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASW	Anti-submarine Warfare
BB	Battleship
CF	Canadian Forces
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
CVN	Nuclear-powered Aircraft Carrier
DCNO	Deputy Chief of Naval Operations
MAGTF	Marine Air Ground Task Force
MCM	Mine Countermeasures
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPNAV	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
RN	Royal Navy
SECNAV	Secretary of the Navy
SLBM	Submarine-launched Ballistic Missile
SSBN	Nuclear-powered Ballistic Missile Submarine
SSN	Nuclear-powered Attack Submarine
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy
USNR	United States Naval Reserve
V/STOL	Vertical/Short Take-off and Landing

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My sincere thanks go to Admiral Jeremy Boorda, U.S. Navy, Captain John L. Byron, U.S. Navy (ret.), Rear-Admiral Fred Crickard, RCN (ret.), Dr. Frank Harvey, Dr. Dan Middlemiss, Dr. Gil Winham, and my father, Major Reg Thompson, CF (ret.) for their feedback, insight and helpful comments on earlier versions of this project. I would also like to thank P.T. Haydon for allowing me to make use of his personal library. Most importantly though, I dedicate this study to my beloved friend and kindred spirit, Wendy MacLaurin. Without her kindness and support, this study would not have been possible.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In 1992, noted maritime analyst Anthony Preston opened an article, entitled "Surface Warfare in the U.S. Navy," by saying that:

> In a navy apparently dominated by submariners and aviators it has taken a long time and a hard, uphill fight for the surface warriors to make their voices heard. Yet the U.S. Navy must face the necessity of fighting on the surface and guaranteeing the passage of merchant ships and warships alike.[1]

Although Preston was certainly not the first to make this observation, few have stated the problem so concisely, and it provides a good launching point for my investigation. In my study I shall analyze a number of questions related to the development of the U.S. Navy since the end of the Second World War. How, for example, did aviators and later submariners take the place of the battleship officers to become the dominant group in the naval bureaucracy? How has their long-term dominance of the bureaucracy affected the surface fleet? Why do some communities rarely seem to get the funding they need while others are richly endowed with resources, and what are the implications of this for U.S. naval operations? And finally, what can be done to build a more effective Navy?

It is my contention that the answers to these fundamental questions can be found by understanding the effects of several interrelated factors, including: the international strategic environment, national military policy, congressional preferences, technological progress, interservice rivalry over missions, navy strategic concepts, the unique influence of Admiral Hyman Rickover, and intranavy parochialism.[2] It is argued that in combination with these other factors, parochialism has had a detrimental effect on the organization, and that adding new requirements for promotion to senior flag rank may be necessary to remedy the problem.

In essence, changes in the international strategic environment and advances in technology allowed for the national strategic doctrine to change in the 1940s, and that change of doctrine was the catalyst for intense interservice rivalry between the Navy and the Air Force, with each trying to find its niche. This new concentration on air power and nuclear weapons allowed aviators to achieve dominance in the bureaucracy. Later in the 1950s and 1960s, technological innovations in submarine propulsion, the political savvy of Admiral Hyman Rickover, and fears over Soviet missile advances created the right conditions for nuclear submariners to eventually supplant aviators in the naval bureaucracy. And as each community took over the bureaucracy, their preferences became the Navy's preferences.

This brings up the last factor, parochialism. In the context of the U.S. Navy, and this study, parochialism refers to the phenomenon in which many warriors tend to believe that their organizational subunit (community), be it the submarine force, naval aviation, or the surface ship force, is better or more important than the other communities. Although many have discussed parochialism in the U.S. Navy, very few have examined it in any great detail. The main purpose of this study is to suggest that, combined with the other factors, parochialism has probably had a significant affect, in terms of decision-making, on acquisitions, modernization, and ship-building in the post-war era.

Overview

The second chapter will establish the context for the study. I begin by discussing the rivalries between surface ship officers, aviators and submariners before and during the war, and the practical results of the war in reference to the relative stature of the surface fleet, aircraft carriers, and submarines. I then describe how the advent of nuclear weapons and rivalry with the U.S. Air Force over roles and missions under the new nuclear strategic doctrine in the late 1940s made it possible for aviators to eventually dominate the naval bureaucracy (dominance is measured by relative numbers of senior flag officers in each community). In the second section, I move on to describe how the submarine community benefited from Admiral Rickover's push for nuclear propulsion and the Kennedy Administration's requirement for an invulnerable second strike capability, and how it

gradually displaced the aviation community and became dominant in the 1980s and early 1990s.[3]

The third chapter examines the parochial aspect of the problem. Many have concluded that America's post-war Navy is not really a single navy, but rather three separate naval "communities": submarines, aircraft carriers, and surface ships,[4] although as we shall see in the fourth chapter, the latter is much less cohesive than the other two. Each of the three major communities has distinctive uniform symbols, jargon, and the belief that it is the "backbone" of the Navy. Drawing from statements from senior naval officers, historians, politicians, and academics, I argue that these warfare communities have all the characteristics of subcultures, and in the absence of strong institutional restraint, their existence tends to promote parochial thinking and an unhealthy rivalry among the Navy officer specialty groups. The result, in the words of Captain John Byron, is that:

> We have become a Navy comprised of smaller navies, supported by a shore establishment made up of non-communicating fiefdoms. Isolation is extreme among the warfare specialties, and bureaucratic insularity typifies the shore establishment. For all officers, the oath of office is the same and the major mission is the same. Yet we line officers identify not with the Navy as a whole but rather with its parts.[5]

With aviators and then submariners in the dominant position in the post-war naval bureaucracy, the fourth chapter begins with an examination of the effects of their parochialism on the displaced surface combatant force. I posit that as other major navies modernized their surface ships in the 1960s, for example, the aviator admirals who dominated the American Navy bureaucracy allowed surface ships to obsolesce and prevented them from acquiring long-range cruise missiles (because these weapons would have competed with the needs of naval aviation).[6] The last section discusses how parochialism within the surface force itself has also contributed to some problems, especially the Navy's long-term ability to perform some very important, but unglamorous, tasks. As a consequence, the Americans have suffered unnecessary operational limitations in various conflicts because certain elements of the fleet were (and still are) much weaker than they probably should be, especially the mine warfare branch.[7]

The fifth chapter looks to the future and argues that with the decline of the Soviet threat, the resulting change in strategic concept, the new emphasis on joint operations between the Navy/Marines, the Army and Air Force, and the desire to cut expensive Cold War-type naval programs like the nuclear submarine, the status of some of the more neglected components of the surface fleet will probably rise. This seems a fairly strong possibility, and it is worth keeping in mind that the officer who replaced Admiral Frank Kelso (a submariner) as Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) is in fact from the surface fleet. Indeed, Admiral Jeremy Boorda is the first surface fleet officer to be appointed CNO in almost 25 years.[8] If this is a signal that surface warfare officers may finally get a bigger share of the top flag officer billets, it could well be a turning point for a navy long dominated by the blue-water parochial concerns of aviators and nuclear submariners.

However, in the conclusion, I argue that despite all the changes in recent years, unless something is done to break the noose of parochialism, the Navy officer corps will remain divided, and as in the past, the Navy will probably be less effective than may be required. I suggest a possible course of action to help overcome the sometimes debilitating affects of parochialism.

Before I begin the discussion, a few words about sources. Although I made great efforts to consult a wide variety of sources (government documents and studies, Navy officer registries, biographies, opinion pieces, and scholarly reports and books) the reader will see a large number of references drawn from the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*. This was desirable for two reasons. Firstly, this periodical is considered to be the U.S. Navy's professional journal. Since the author's primary interest is the attitudes prevalent in the U.S. Navy officer corps, *Proceedings* was a logical choice because it provides an open forum for discussion on issues concerning the U.S. Navy and its officers. Secondly, it publishes a large variety of items on subjects that one cannot find in other journals. As one naval officer put it: ". . . subjects discussed in *Proceedings* represent a professional consensus of what the important issues are."[9]

NOTES

1. Anthony Preston "Surface Warfare in the U.S. Navy," *Naval Forces*, No. 2, 1992, p. 50.

2. John A. Williams, "U.S. Navy Missions and Force Structure: A Critical Reappraisal," *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 17, No. 4, Summer 1981, pp. 521-23; Vincent Davis, *The Politics of Innovation: Patterns in Navy Cases* (Denver: University of Denver Press, 1967), pp. 7-15; Vincent Davis, *Post War Defense Policy and the U.S. Navy*, 1943-1946 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1966), pp. 119-57, 190-207; Samuel Huntington, "National Policy and the Transoceanic Navy," *Proceedings*, May 1954, pp. 483-93; Stephen Rosen, "New Ways of War: Understanding Military Innovation," *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 1, Summer 1988, pp. 134-68.

3. Arnold Kanter, *Defense Politics: A Budgetary Perspective* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 111.

4. Norman Friedman, *The U.S. Maritime Strategy* (London: Jane's Publishing, 1988), p. 7; Jan Breemer, *U.S. Naval Developments* (Annapolis: The Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1983), pp. 9-10.

5. Captain John L. Byron, U.S. Navy, "The Surface Navy is Not Ready," *Proceedings*, December 1987, p. 39.

6. Dr. M. Muir, Jr., "A Stillborn System: The Submarine-Launched Cruise Missile in the United States Navy. 1945 to 1964." Paper presented at the Conference on The Undersea Dimension of Maritime Strategy, Halifax, Nova Scotia: 21-24 June 1989, p. 246; Dr. David K. Stumpf, "Blasts from the Past," *Proceedings*, April 1993, pp. 60-64.

7. Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, U.S. Navy, *On Watch* (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), p. 63; U.S. Congress. Congressional Budget Office, *Shaping the General Purpose Navy of the Eighties: Issues for Fiscal Years 1981-1985* (Washington: G.P.O., January 1980), pp. 78-80.

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CHAPTER 2

AVIATORS AND SUBMARINERS COME TO POWER

The Aviators' Ascent

Before one can understand what happened to the U.S. Navy during and after the Second World War, one must first have an understanding of the group which dominated the Navy prior to the war. First of all, it is important to note that since the turn of the century, American naval strategic thought has been guided largely by the writings of Alfred T. Mahan, who argued that the main purpose of a great world power navy is primarily offensive; to battle other navies for command of the open ocean.[1] Thus, the most powerful and offensive blue-water ships would tend to be the dominant component in the fleet, and their officers the majority in the naval bureaucracy. Although aircraft carriers and submarines were able to find their niche as defensive platforms, between the 1890s and the 1940s, America's navy was very much dominated by battleships. With their enormous size, heavy armor, and awesome gun firepower, battleships were considered to be the U.S. Navy's preeminent warships. Indeed, the United States (and other great powers) considered the battleship a prerequisite for a great navy. In other words, the American view was that a navy without battleships was simply not a great navy. In the late 1930s, one U.S. Rear Admiral said: "The battleship stands at the top of the pyramid, invincible to the fire offered by lesser craft".[2] Robert O'Connell put it this way:

> The battleship was, in the minds of line officers, a symbol of order and naval propriety, the bulwark of confusion of battle and the unknown. It was, as its Annapolite defenders would repeat over and over in the 1920s and 1930s, the 'backbone of the fleet'—a vital organizing force about which other entities should be arranged. Its absence implied formlessness and chaos—spinelessness.[3]

The very thought that aircraft might someday supplant the battleship as the Navy's primary strategic platform was, needless to say, rather unpopular among the battleship admirals who dominated the Navy. Reynolds noted that after U.S. naval aviation managed to get its first aircraft carrier in the 1920s, there was considerable tension between old battleship advocates and young aviators.[4] The battleship officers:

> . . . naturally did not subscribe to any new weapon that threatened to destroy the battleship. Furthermore, they found greasy airplanes a nuisance on their quarterdecks. . . . Since gunnery was their main punch, the battleship sailors identified themselves with the Bureau of Ordinance, known throughout the Navy as the Gun Club.[5]

Indeed, most battleship officers considered the aircraft carrier to be a defensive platform, whose main role was to launch airplanes to locate enemy naval forces and guide the battleship-centered fleets into contact. Likewise, the U.S. submarine force was used mostly for reconnaissance and scouting. Offensive operations were the exclusive domain of the surface navy, and more specifically, its battleships and heavy cruisers.[6]

As history tells us, this mentality would not stand the test of time. When carrier-based Japanese aircraft launched a surprise attack on the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in 1941, the prime victims were America's battleships. Many argue that this tragedy was the major catalyst for the decline of the American battleship as the primary capital ship, and the rise of the aircraft carrier in American naval strategy:

> The significance of the aircraft carrier within the United States Navy stems from an accident of fate: when the Japanese attacked the U.S. base at Pearl Harbor in 1941 during the Second World War, the aircraft carriers of the Pacific Fleet were at sea on manoeuvres. Though America's battleships were sunk in the raid, the carriers survived and by 1945 had proved their worth as the capital ships of the fleet.[7]

While this account is accepted by many people, it overlooks a great many factors.[8] For example, the transition from a battleship navy to an air navy was not automatic. Indeed, there was a lengthy power struggle within the Navy during the war. Very often, members of the Navy were fighting not only the Japanese and Germans, but one

another. Reynolds argued that in spite of the destruction of the battleships at Pearl Harbor:

> . . . the administrative structure of the Navy Department was built upon the battleship as capital ship of the fleet. Any reorientation to air or anything else would upset a system of command and promotion that had been gradually molded since the days of Mahan fifty years before. Conservative forces within the Navy would resist such a change, despite the exigencies of war.[9]

For over a year, senior naval aviators argued that the battleship admirals who commanded the fleets were still not using the aircraft carriers to their full offensive potential. To help solve the problem, Admiral John H. Towers (who was one of the very few high-ranking naval aviators in the early years of the war) successfully lobbied the CNO to have the billet for Deputy Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet reserved for aviators only.[10] Under mounting pressures from the senior aviators, who argued persuasively that the U.S. Navy was at a disadvantage against the more air-minded Japanese admirals, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Ernest King (who was one of a small number of officers who joined the Navy as a surface ship officer but later voluntarily became an aviator)[11] created a new position for an aviator vice admiral to serve as his deputy in charge of naval aviation.[12] Furthermore, in late 1944:

> King also injected a major reform in the fleet which further entrenched aviation as the principal element of the U.S. Navy. He now ruled what the aviators had considered long overdue, that all nonaviator fleet and task force commanders have aviators as chiefs of staff. Furthermore, these officers – like the existing non-air chiefs of staff to air admirals – should be upgraded in rank from captain to commodore or rear admiral. . . . This came as a blow to many admirals of the "Gun Club".[13]

This recognition gave the aviators more clout in the bureaucracy.

It should be pointed out, however, that the aviators also received a great deal of help from civilian leaders in the Navy Department. Their help would be crucial in overcoming the battleship advocates. Davis noted that aviators benefited greatly from the leadership of the Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal, and Assistant Navy Secretary for Air, Artemus Gates:

Artemus Gates was a prominent and aggressive industrialist who had joined the administration in Washington during the war preparation year of 1940. Moreover, he himself had been a pioneer aviator in World War I and had been decorated for combat heroism. Ultimately, the aviators' most important supporter and ally in their bid for prominence was another World War I Navy flier who, more than any other man, shaped the post-World War II Navy: Secretary Forrestal.[14]

By most accounts, Forrestal was the strongest and most influential advocate for naval aviation, especially during the discussions on the unification of the armed forces during and after the war.[15] During congressional testimony in 1944, Forrestal argued emphatically that aviation was a vital component of the Navy's striking power, and that any attempt to weaken the air component (by allowing the Army Air Force to annex it) would be a tremendous mistake.[16] With the support of Admiral King (who was only a moderate supporter), Gates and Forrestal (who had been the Under-Secretary of the Navy until he was promoted to Secretary in 1944), aviators managed to gain influence in the naval bureaucracy during the war.[17]

When the war ended, it was clear that the U.S. Navy was in the midst of a radical transformation.[18] The early skeptics were proven wrong. The once clearly dominant battleship had lost its heretofore unquestioned prominence to the aircraft carrier. The surface navy was still the largest community in terms of flag officers, but by the end of the 1950s, it would at best play "second fiddle"[19] in the flag ranks. As Admiral Marc Mitscher argued: "Japan is beaten, and carrier supremacy defeated her. Carrier supremacy destroyed her army and navy air forces. Carrier supremacy destroyed her fleet. . . ." He continued: ". . . And carrier supremacy finally left her exposed to the most devastating sky attack—the atomic fission bomb—that man has suffered."[20]

The aircraft carrier had truly come of age.[21] Between June 1940 and June 1945, the Navy's aircraft carrier strength increased from 6 to 98, whereas the battleship strength went from 15 to just 23.[22] When America entered the war in 1941, just 12 percent of the Navy's line flag officers were aviators. By 1945, that figure had increased to 27 percent. More importantly though, the percentage of four-star admirals who were aviators had increased from 14 percent to 25 percent.[23] But, and this is a key point, *this was just the beginning*

of the transformation. Indeed, just a few months after the war ended, Forrestal proclaimed:

> The actual fact is that the Navy is becoming an Air Navy. It is becoming that by a natural evolution of its activities and a natural reflection of the increasing preponderance of Naval aviation in our activities. The leading commands of the Navy will in time be occupied by men who deal with air in one form or another.[24]

But this "natural evolution" was given a significant boost by Forrestal, who moved very quickly and deliberately to restructure the Navy after the war to increase the political power of the air component. He reorganized the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, which among other things, required that the Vice Chief of Naval Operations and two of the six deputy CNOs always be aviators.[25] In addition, he ensured that aviators would finally be given fleet commands, giving them even more influence within the Navy.[26] And if this were not enough, he also lobbied Congress in late 1945 to increase the number of line aviation officers so as to give them parity with surface officers: "The Navy, as I envisage it after the war, would be about 50-50, half air and half surface, and we want to be sure it has an extension of its views at the top level."[27] (Notice that there is no reference to the submarine community, indicating that branch had only minor bureaucratic significance in the early post-war years). In 1946, Admiral Arthur Radford, one of the senior aviators, successfully argued in Congress that the Navy actually needed more aviator flag officers after the war than during it in order to "better integrate the aviation end in the Navy so that we would be completely air-minded throughout."[28] Aviators also supported a bid in Congress to lower the mandatory retirement age from 64 to 62, which effectively removed some of the older battleship officers from the Navy. This gave the young aviators even more opportunity to advance to flag rank.[29]

This begs the question of why Forrestal was so concerned about turning the Navy into an air-centered force, even after the war had ended. As it turned out, he (and his allies and successors) had very good reasons to emphasize the air component in the post-war Navy. While intranavy factors had kept the aviators in a subordinate position within the bureaucracy before the war (and during the first few years of it), the greatest threat to naval aviation in the post-war

environment came not from the surface officers, but from the Army Air Force and nuclear weapons.

When the war ended, the U.S. Navy was by far the most powerful navy on Earth. More powerful, in fact, than all the rest of the world's navies combined.[30] This was an enviable position to be in during the war, but with the end of the war, and the advent of nuclear weapons, the Navy's future did not seem very promising. In fact, many believed that nuclear weapons had rendered the Navy obsolete. The atomic tests at Bikini Atoll in 1946 confirmed that surface ships, including aircraft carriers, were quite vulnerable to nuclear weapons.[31] The Army Air Force had the monopoly on the atomic bomb for the first few years after the war ended, and their advocates were tremendously vocal. All future wars will be fought with long-range bombers equipped with nuclear bombs they said, and the logical choice for America was to let the Air Force become independent from the Army, and assume the national strategic bombing role it pioneered during the war.[32]

Apparently, many Americans felt that the Army Air Force had "won the war," and that it would be the predominant service in the post-war era. Samuel Huntington noted that a Gallup Poll taken in 1949: ". . . revealed that 76% of the American people thought that the Air Force would play the most important role in winning any future war whereas only 4% assigned this role to the Navy."[33] With such overwhelming pressure from the Army Air Force (and later, the independent U.S. Air Force), the Navy faced an uphill battle even to justify its continued existence. In fact, in September 1945, Navy Secretary Forrestal mentioned that the Navy had a requirement for nuclear weapons as well, and that America still needed a flexible, balanced navy (with a very strong air component) capable of fighting a total nuclear war and so-called limited wars:

> Does the atomic bomb immediately destroy navies now in existence? It does not. In the first place, the atomic bomb, although immensely destructive, is still a bomb, requiring land or carrier based planes to deliver it. Moreover, the best defense against it is intercepting air power. In the second place, the limitations and uncertainties which at this stage of its development surround the atomic bomb, and which I cannot discuss publicly, are such that, if we were to give away our fleet today and rely wholly on the atomic bomb, we would lose control of the sea. In my opinion,

> therefore, there is no doubt about the necessity--and I'm sure sensible men will agree with the conclusion--for the continuation now of a modern Navy, its carrier forces, its surface and submarine forces, and its amphibious arm capable of taking and holding beachheads.[34]

In addition, the Navy also had to worry about the proposed unification of the armed forces. The idea of integrating the U.S. Armed Forces was brought up during the war, but reappeared after it ended, largely as a result from pressure from the Army Air Force. Many in the Navy thought that the new scheme, which was ostensibly intended to make the forces more efficient and eliminate duplication of services, would be tantamount to handing naval aviation over to the Air Force.[35] The Air Force was the political favorite, and its supporters believed that:

> The Air Force had supplanted the Navy as the nation's first line of defense. Therefore, all conventional forces including aircraft carriers were made obsolete; the Navy need not develop any strategic air capability; the Navy should supinely give up its air arm – about 30 percent of the Navy – to the Air Force; and the Navy should be reduced to a minor auxiliary service dealing with antisubmarine warfare and sea transportation.[36]

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that the Navy had to put forward its most appropriate asset, namely its aircraft carriers. Navy officials argued that the Navy could do the strategic bombing mission as well, and would be better at it than the Air Force because of the mobility and flexibility of the carriers. Carrier-based aircraft could be modified to carry nuclear weapons, and Navy fighters could be used to intercept enemy (that is, Soviet) bombers over the oceans.[37] With a great deal of lobbying in Congress, the Navy managed to survive unification with its fleet air arm intact.[38] But in order to better capitalize on the government's enthusiasm for strategic bombing, the Navy also submitted a proposal for a new supercarrier in the late 1940s, one that would be large enough to easily carry long-range bombers and large numbers of nuclear weapons. In 1949, however, the administration scrapped the project in favor of the Air Force B-36 strategic bomber.[39] Things did not look good for naval aviation.

However, the Korean War of 1950-1953 gave a boost to the Navy, and naval aviation in particular. The threat of international communist expansion had put the Congress in a pro-military mood, and

the superb performance of naval aircraft during that limited war proved that naval aviation could play an important and unique role in the post-war environment. Also, the Navy took advantage of its renewed prestige (and the new emphasis on "massive retaliation" and "Mutual Assured Destruction")[40] to finally secure support for larger aircraft carriers and a strategic bombing role.[41] Floyd Kennedy deduced that:

> The naval growth during the Korean War was highly encouraging for advocates of naval power. The precipitous decline in numbers of ships and personnel that had taken place immediately after World War II had been dramatically reversed; the theory of "the next war" being conducted by strategic bombing alone had been disproved; the value of naval forces in limited war had been accepted; the new supercarriers of the Forrestal class were being authorized by Congress at the rate of one per year; smaller nuclear weapons were being developed to facilitate their use by carrier aviation; and the Navy had assured itself a nuclear strike role by being assigned a portion of the precious stockpile of atomic weapons. The Cold War Navy was emerging as a potent force, both on the international scene and within the government itself.[42]

Given the great pressures put on the Navy to justify its existence in the new age of strategic bombing and competition with a strong independent Air Force, it was necessary for the Navy to emphasize the special capabilities of its carrier-based airpower. The new national strategic doctrine had forced the Navy to adapt and find a way to stay useful and competitive with the Air Force. In other words, as Huntington suggested, the Navy had to transform itself from a purely oceanic force (based on the theories of Mahan) to a transoceanic strategic force still capable of commanding the seas, but also capable of reaching deep into the enemy homeland (which the government believed would be the Soviet Union).[43] To do that, it had to have aircraft carriers big enough to carry out the requirements of strategic bombing. In essence, the Navy had redefined its strategic concept in order to survive. Huntington put it best when he said:

> The fundamental element of a military service is its purpose or role in implementing national policy. The statement of this role may be called the strategic concept of the service. Basically, this concept is a description of how, when, and where the military service expects to protect the nation against some threat to its security. If a military service does not possess such a concept, it wallows amid

> a variety of conflicting and confusing goals, and ultimately it suffers both physical and moral degeneration.[44]

By reorienting to a transoceanic strategy, the Navy had effectively created a new capital ship, the nuclear-armed supercarrier. Michael Vlahos noted that the aircraft carrier, and more specifically, the supercarrier:

> . . . took over the traditional tasks of the battleship – destruction of the enemy battlefleet and control of the sea – and then extended its reach beyond the shore.[45]

As the civilian leaders in the Navy Department came to realize that the future was in naval airpower, the importance of the naval air community rapidly increased. Forrestal had restructured the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) at the end of the war, and Arnold Kanter noted that as the organizational essence of the Navy changed from a battleship-centered force to an air-centered force in the years that followed, the promotion opportunity ratios began to favor the aviators.[46] The official reason was that it would be necessary to have a majority of aviators at the top to direct the new air-centered Navy. Just as important, however, was the need to make sure that the "old guard" non-aviators would not be able to interfere with the reorientation. Indeed, from the late 1940s to 1969, aviator captains were much more likely to be promoted to flag rank than non-aviators. In the late 1950s, for example, aviator captains were almost two and a half times more likely to become flag officers than submariners or surface ship officers. Over time, these promotion policies gave aviators the predominant voice in the naval bureaucracy.[47]

By the mid-1950s, approximately 40 percent of the Navy's line flag officers were aviators, as were a like number of its four-star admirals.[48] When one also takes into account the fact that the submariners (who were at the time not in the position to compete with the aviators, but were very interested in putting an end to surface navy dominance) held between 15 and 20 percent of the flag officer billets in the 1940s and 1950s, it was clear that surface ship officers would no longer enjoy numerical dominance (nor be the preponderant influence on decision-making) in the bureaucracy.[49]

The ascendancy of aviators in the naval bureaucracy is probably best described by looking at how many aviators have held the

position of Chief of Naval Operations. The CNO is the highest ranking officer in the U.S. Navy (except when a naval officer is Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), and this officer holds the dominant position. By the 1960s, it was apparent that aviators had indeed taken over the Navy. Between 1961 and 1982, five out of the six CNOs were aviators.[50] As Reynolds said in the late 1970s, the air-centered Navy was well established:

> The U.S. Navy has continued to be led by its aviators through the 1970s, as the last World War II-weaned "brown shoes" attained the senior commands just as their fast carriers under the Seventh Fleet commander Admiral L. J. Holloway III (wings 1946) bombed North Vietnam in the closing days of that war (1972-73), those in the Sixth Fleet stood by during the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, and in all continued to police the world's oceans under the Pax Americana, even as the Soviet Union began to float a modest carrier force of its own. Admiral Noel Gaylor, once of Towers' staff, held the Pacific Command, 1972-76, and after non-aviator Admiral E.R. Zumwalt, Jr., served four years as a controversial CNO, the Navy turned again to its aviators as Admiral Holloway assumed the post in 1974. *The continuity of America's air-centered Navy has thus remained intact for more than three decades and promises the same for the foreseeable future.*[51]

But contrary to Reynolds' last assertion, the days of unquestioned aviator dominance were also numbered. Michael Krepon predicted that as technology advanced, the aircraft carrier would eventually suffer the same fate as the battleship.[52] By the mid-1960s, aviators began to lose the preferential treatment they had long received with regard to promotions to flag rank. Indeed, by 1970, aviators were actually less likely to make flag rank than other groups in the Navy.[53] Just as the aircraft carrier had replaced the battleship as the Navy's primary offensive platform,[54] the nuclear-powered, ballistic missile submarine was beginning to replace the carrier in the strategic role.[55]

The Submarine Surfaces

There are a number of parallels concerning the emergence of the aircraft carrier and the submarine in the U.S. Navy after the Second World War. Like the carrier, prior to the American entry in the war, submarines were also considered to be strictly defensive platforms. Their main job was to serve as scouts for the American fleets, take intelligence photos, and report movements of the enemy fleet. Unlike

the German U-Boats, which terrorized the Atlantic in both world wars, prior to the Second World War, American submarines were not really intended or trained to be true "predators." A second parallel is that the U.S. Pacific Submarine Force also managed to survive the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor virtually unscathed. And although the Pacific Submarine Force was unprepared, both in terms of materiel and tactics, it had to keep the Japanese at bay until the rest of the fleet could be rebuilt.[56]

Through the course of the war, tactics and materiel improved, and like the aircraft carriers, the submarines made an impressive effort. As Clay Blair posited:

> No matter how the figures were looked at, the damage inflicted by the U.S. submarine force on Japan was severe and contributed substantially to winning the war in the Pacific. As the report of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey stated, "The war against shipping was perhaps the most decisive single factor in the collapse of the Japanese economy and logistic support of Japanese military and naval power. Submarines accounted for the majority of vessel sinkings and the greater part of the reduction in tonnage."[57]

This was a remarkable feat, especially when one keeps in mind that submariners made up only two percent of the U.S. Navy's personnel strength.[58] The importance of the submarine force to the U.S. Navy's war effort was spelled out in 1944 by Vice Admiral R.S. Edwards:

> There is one arm which is employed more or less independently and unassisted against the enemy's war potential, and that is submarines. The submarine, more than any other single weapon, can operate in areas under the strategic and tactical control of the enemy without assistance from any other arm.[59]

But in spite of the great success of the American submarine force during the war, submariners never achieved the same growth in the flag ranks as the aviators during the 1940s and 1950s. True, the percentage of submariners in the flag ranks was greater than in the Navy as a whole, but nevertheless their representation in the flag ranks was not proportionate to the magnitude of their war effort. Between 1941 and 1945, for example, despite the great expansion of the submarine fleet, the percentage of submariner flag officers barely increased (from 13 percent to 20 percent). Furthermore, the submariners only had one four-star admiral (out of a total of 12 such

billets in 1945).[60] And unlike the aviators, the percentage of submariner flag officers actually fell after the war ended. By 1959, only 16 percent of the flag officers were submariners; only slightly better than the figures of 1941.[61]

The reason why this happened is fairly easy to understand. Although effective in limited war at sea, the small diesel electric submarines of the late 1940s and early 1950s were not of much use in a total nuclear war. The submarine force survived because of Forrestal's commitment to a "balanced navy," but for many years it seemed that submariners simply would not have the kind of clout (in terms of numbers of high-ranking officers) that the aviators received.[62] John Keegan inferred that:

> Expert prognosis, had it been sought in 1945, might well have held that the submarine's potential for development lagged far behind that of the aircraft carrier. . . . Schnorkel boats were . . . able to cruise submerged on their diesels at speeds better than electric motors could deliver; but the schnorkel imposed unpleasant pressure changes on the crew, which effectively limited underwater endurance, while cruising range was still determined by fuel capacity. The submarine's offensive capacity, moreover, continued to reside in the torpedo, of which even the best models, like the heavyweight, high-speed Japanese 'Long Lance', were comparatively short-range and inaccurate.[63]

Not surprisingly, submariners felt slighted. In their view, the "Silent Service" had won the war, but its members did not seem to be getting any benefits for their efforts. One submarine proponent observed that:

> In the immediate postwar years, the younger submariners did not fare well in the Navy. There were only two flag-rank billets: Commander Submarines Atlantic and Commander Submarines Pacific. To get ahead, most men had to branch out into other parts of the Navy. Even so, they found it difficult. Herman Kossler (a rear admiral) maintained that aviators and destroyer men dominated the Navy and were able to "divide up the flag rank vacancies as they saw fit," that there was a "general feeling, particularly by destroyer officers, that submariners were not qualified to man surface flag billets," and that there was "jealousy between destroyer men and submariners."[64]

Fortunately though, there were a few officers (and civilian leaders like Forrestal) who had the foresight to realize that with a nuclear propulsion system, the strategic capacity of the submarine would increase dramatically, and be a more effective contributor to a balanced U.S. Navy. Of course, the main figure was Admiral Hyman G. Rickover. Rickover, a submariner, was the driving force behind the Navy's nuclear propulsion program. He began doing research on the prospects for nuclear propulsion in 1946. In 1949 he began to work under the auspices of the Atomic Energy Commission and later the Department of Energy, and retired as a four-star admiral and head of Naval Nuclear Propulsion in the early 1980s.[65]

Rickover was a controversial officer to say the least, and most analysts would agree that more than anyone else in the Navy, it was he that launched the "nuclear Navy" and fought for a high status for the U.S. submarine force in the Navy and in Congress.[66] This was in large part due to the fact that his membership in the Atomic Energy Commission and then the Department of Energy gave him independence from the Navy Department, and allowed him to lobby in Congress with no fear of being reproached.[67] However, his efforts were undoubtedly helped by the international situation in the 1950s and 1960s.

Soon after the first atomic submarine (*USS Nautilus*) was launched in 1955, the Navy began research on the feasibility of rigging nuclear submarines to carry long-range nuclear missiles. They had a very strong incentive to consider this option. Commander Nicholas Whitestone, RN, summarized the strategic situation of the late 1950s:

> Soviet Russia had exploded her first H-Bomb and the warning was clear; the whole strategic situation had changed: the two most powerful nations were becoming capable of destroying each other with inter-continental ballistic missiles against which there was no known defence. The enemy might thus be tempted to win by a so-called 'pre-emptive' attack. It was vital to find a 'second strike' weapon that would survive the critical onslaught and be available to retaliate. What better than a force of missile-carrying submarines, which could inflict unacceptable damage on an enemy even after land and air forces had been destroyed?[68]

This need for a secure second-strike capability eventually materialized in the Polaris missile program. Despite opposition from the air

force, and some naval aviators,[69] the program was given the go-ahead in 1956.[70] Although not particularly popular within the Navy, the Polaris program was said to be extremely popular with President Kennedy. In fact, after watching a Polaris test flight in 1962, Kennedy is reported to have said: "Once one has seen a Polaris firing, the efficacy of this weapons system as a deterrent is not debatable."[71] Kennedy was so impressed with the program that he ordered the Navy to speed up its delivery schedule.[72]

When missile submarines started becoming operational throughout the 1960s, it became clear that the aircraft carrier's day as the Navy's primary strategic platform was coming to an end.[73] Nuclear submarines, by their very nature, are much more difficult to detect than large aircraft carriers, and more difficult to destroy. Thus, the nuclear ballistic missile submarine truly has the freedom to navigate and go places that would be impossible for an aircraft carrier and its battle group.[74] Polaris submarines replaced aircraft carriers as the Navy's contribution to the Single Integrated Operational Plan for nuclear war in the mid-1960s, leaving the aircraft carriers to conduct only "limited nuclear warfare" and conventional missions.[75] From then on, the status of the submarine community began to increase.

In 1966, one naval officer predicted that the nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine would become the Navy's "decisive arbiter of naval power."[76] Others called the submarine "the new battleship."[77] Furthermore, by the early 1970s, large U.S. nuclear submarines started to be called "ships" rather than just "boats."[78] In any event, the submarine, like the carrier and the battleship before it, had come of age. Keegan concluded that:

> The era of the submarine as the predominant weapon of power at sea must . . . be recognized as having begun. It is already the instrument of ultimate nuclear deterrence between the superpowers, holding at risk their cities, industries and populations as it circles their shores on its relentless oceanic orbit. It is now the ultimate capital ship, deploying the means to destroy any surface fleet that enters its zone of operations.[79]

Since the nuclear submarine had eclipsed the aircraft carrier as the main strategic weapons system, Navy leaders believed it was necessary to have more submariners in the flag ranks. As noted earlier, the promotion opportunity ratios began to disfavor aviators by 1970.

Kanter said that other groups in the Navy began to challenge the aviators for numerical dominance in the top slots in the bureaucracy, especially the submariners.[80] By the late 1970s, submariners had made a great deal of progress in the flag ranks. In 1979, there were more submariners than aviators at the four-star level, although the CNO (Admiral Thomas Hayward) was an aviator.[81] Between 1982 and the spring of 1994, however, all three CNOs (Admirals James Watkins, Carlisle Trost, and Frank Kelso) were submariners.[82]

What is particularly interesting is that although the submariners are by far the smallest line officer community (they make up approximately 7 percent of the total officer corps), as of May 1992, submariners occupied 40 percent of the four-star billets.[83] Furthermore, one finds that the percentage of submarine officers increases as one goes up the rank structure. In other words, while aviators and surface ship officers dominate the one-, two- and three-star billets, the submariners are the largest community at the four-star level, thus they are the ones with the real power in the Navy.[84]

It would seem that for many years there has been a "glass ceiling" of sorts for aviators and surface ship officers. If one wanted to become a four-star admiral during the last twenty years or so, it would have been to one's advantage to have been a submariner. Indeed, former Navy Secretary John Lehman admitted that submariners were the great beneficiaries during his tenure in the 1980s: "Statistically, submariners benefited disproportionately in promotions throughout my entire tenure, including those selections to three- and four-star rank that I recommended personally."[85]

Few now would doubt that the U.S. Navy has been dominated by submariners until very recently. The nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine had overtaken the aircraft carrier in the strategic role, and as always, the community which controls the primary offensive platforms also dominates the naval bureaucracy.[86] Submariners have come so far in the last thirty years that some now have the confidence to suggest that the President should ask, "Where are the submarines?" rather than the traditional query "Where are the carriers?" when an overseas crisis erupts.[87]

As with aviators in the 1940s, submariners benefited from changes in the international strategic environment, technological innovations (nuclear weapons and nuclear propulsion), and a new national policy

which required long-range missiles and an invulnerable second-strike force. In the 1940s, the government was focused on long-range bombers and atomic bombs. In the 1960s (and onward), the focus was on building missiles in order to maintain the balance of power with the Soviet Union. In both cases, the communities which could best meet the perceived strategic needs of the civilian administration gained ascendancy in the bureaucracy.[88] Unfortunately though, the dominance of one group over a long period of time can sometimes be very unhealthy for the organization as a whole, especially if the organization is as disunited as the U.S. Navy. This issue will be discussed in the next two chapters.

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CHAPTER 3

THE U.S. NAVY: A DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY

Pride and Prejudice: The Warrior Cultures

Esprit is based on common traditions, symbols, shared routines and goal-orientations—in brief, an integrated way of life. The forces segregating naval personnel contribute to their morale and their in-group cohesiveness with results both functional and dysfunctional for the system. Strong esprit helps the organization to survive battle crises; it has written famous sagas in our naval history. But it also hampers adjustment to the external situation by developing parochialism.[1]

In the second chapter, it was noted that changes in the strategic environment, national policy, technological breakthroughs, and rivalry with the Air Force in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s made it possible for aviators and then submariners to achieve long-term dominance in the naval bureaucracy. In a perfect world, this would not present any problems for the organization. However, human beings suffer from a number of failings which can, in some instances, impair objectivity. One such failing is the tendency for many people to give their loyalty to a subunit of an organization, rather than to the organization itself.[2] This is especially common when the subunit exhibits all the prerequisites of an independent culture, with its own legitimate symbols, jargon, sanctioned rituals, and a feeling of exclusiveness.[3]

This is understandable, for as Perry Smith said, in a large, impersonal organization, there is a need "to identify with some smaller and more personal group."[4] People tend to get very attached to the ideologies of these subunits over time, and this can often produce biases.[5] Naval officers are no different from other people in this regard. The U.S. Navy, like other large organizations, is not a "monolithic" entity; within it there are many cleavages or cultures

based on warfare specialties. They all play a vital role in accomplishing the Navy's missions, and each of them has its own sociological quirks. Stephen Rosen said:

> Navy officers may be carrier pilots from the fighter or attack communities, antisubmarine warfare pilots, submariners, surface ship commanders, or from an amphibious force. Each branch has its own culture and distinct way of thinking about the way war should be conducted, not only by itself, but by all the other branches with which it would have to interact in combat. If the military organization is healthy, there is some agreement among the different branches about how they would work together in wartime.[6]

These branches have also been referred to as the three major "unions"; one consisting of aviators, one of submariners, and one of surface ship officers. The aviators and submariners are known as "brown shoes" because they once wore such shoes with their khaki uniforms (although submariners are known to wear felt slippers onboard ship to make the ship less detectable on passive sonar),[7] while the surface navy officers have always worn "black shoes."[8] Former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, and many others for that matter, have argued that these subcultures have a disruptive influence and encourage parochial thinking. In his 1976 memoirs Zumwalt intimated:

> The point is, and it is a difficult one to make clear to an outsider, that for the last quarter-century or more there have been three powerful "unions," as we call them, in the Navy—the aviators, the submariners, and the surface sailors—and their rivalry has played a large part in the way the Navy has been directed.[9]

Indeed, Stephen Cimbala suggested that, "The U.S. Navy, perhaps in part because it is characteristically the most conservative and tradition-bound of the armed services, is always torn by internal acrimony. . . ."[10] Although many have commented on the existence of parochialism in the U.S. Navy,[11] very few people have actually gone into an in-depth analysis to explain why it exists, or why it is so acute in the American navy in particular. The purpose of this chapter is to answer some of these questions. But in order to do that, one must first have an understanding of the nature of naval warfare and of warriors themselves.

It is important to note that unlike ground combat, contemporary naval warfare is three-dimensional; major navies must be able to operate on the surface, in the air above it, and in the waters beneath it. This is the "division of labor" within the modern naval force.[12] Each of these environments has its own unique challenges and requirements, thus naval officers must specialize to a certain extent.[13] Furthermore, each of these environments is more or less isolated from the others. The most extreme example is the submarine service. Once submerged, the submarine is truly on its own. The submariner has no need for air cover or surface ship escorts. Indeed, the U.S. submariner generally subscribes to the belief that there are only two types of ships: submarines and targets.[14]

Since there is a requirement for a certain degree of specialization to meet the rigors of each naval environment, it follows that communities of officers will naturally form in relation to the warfare specialties. Commander Stephen Sloane offered a very good description of the process:

> Individual officers receive initial training and career experience devoted to the development of the technical application of certain skills. They become socialized and adopt the norms of a profession, the essence of which is a warfare specialty weapon system platform such as the aircraft, the surface ship, or the submarine. Moreover, they become "citizens" of a community. . . . These communities provide unique career paths, advancement, assignment, measures of achievement, social relations, self-esteem, power, and a sense of norms, values and ethics. *Indeed, the weapon system warfare application community association tends to define and limit the individual's perception of his own profession*[15]

It should be pointed out that many believe intense loyalty to the warfare community offers some advantages. Military organizations tend to emphasize concepts like group pride as a way to maintain high morale, or "esprit de corps."[16] Admiral Zumwalt affirmed that "It develops a pride in service that is invaluable not only in combat situations, but as an antidote for the routine hardships of peacetime naval duty. It stimulates professional expertise."[17] This is accomplished by a number of means, particularly through the use of distinctive symbols.[18]

As noted earlier, there have traditionally been distinctive uniforms (and shoes) for the warrior communities. The submariners wear gold "dolphins," the aviators wear "wings," and since the mid-1970s, fully-trained surface officers have worn the "Surface Warfare Officer" badge on their uniforms. Each is a recognition of status, although the aviators' wings and submariners' dolphins are more coveted because those communities are considered to be elites since their jobs are considered more demanding than those of surface ship officers.[19] These symbols reflect the status of the individual officer within the organization and promote camaraderie with other officers who wear the same insignia. Basically, it helps to develop their sense of purpose in the Navy. The Navy also has a unique jargon:

> Above all else must be stressed the wearing of uniforms and the lore and lingo of navy life. A unique occupational vocabulary serves both utilitarian and symbolic purposes. It provides essential nomenclature, thereby setting the group apart in its specialized knowledge; and it verbalizes in-group attitudes, thus strengthening them and performing the same latent function as ritual. Few other occupations are knit by such ancient traditions or by so much symbolism.[20]

The Navy has its own jargon, but many of the terms only have intrinsic meaning to certain communities. For example, the expression "flood negative three hundred feet!" has meaning to submariners, but not to aviators or surface ship officers. Each naval community has its own distinctive jargon, and sometimes the differences between them cause confusion, perhaps even some latent hostility. After one surface officer spent some time in the naval aviation community, he wrote an article entitled, "A Black Shoe in a Brown Shoe World," in which he warned other "black shoes" to expect a language barrier when dealing with aviators:

> Do not worry about aviators' language. . . . The Winged Ones themselves have trouble talking to one another. But all take pride in using their secret language, even when it is mutually incomprehensible. So, one of your tasks as a black shoe is to ask for clarification.[21]

Another non-aviator described the culture shock of entering an aviation unit in an article entitled, "Alone and Unafraid with the Brown Shoes." He recalled that:

> The fleet squadron aviation intelligence officer (AI) is a rare species. Found alone or in pairs, he is often the youngest, most junior member of the wardroom, and as a non-aviator, is also usually the object of a steady stream of ready-room humor. If he is to adapt to the squadron environment, he must learn a new language, using terms such as "roger" and "check your six," and hand signals such as the two-finger "let's go" wave. The intelligence officer is often camouflaged in a flight jacket (complete with patches), brown shoes, and aviator sunglasses–and can usually travel virtually unnoticed among aviators, thereby easing the transition into squadron life.[22]

Although these comments are intended to be "tongue in cheek," it is hard to believe that these officers are not on an exchange with a foreign navy, but are in fact just seeing how other communities in their own navy function. Indeed, one could easily argue that these warrior communities have a life all of their own. They have separate traditions, heroes, symbols, forms of discipline, jargon, and recognizable boundaries.[23] Each has a different set of criteria for training and selection as well. Since flying aircraft and serving in submarines is more dangerous than serving in a surface ship, the submarine and air communities are far more selective in terms of personnel than the surface navy. They are independent warrior cultures to be sure.

Although these same subcultures exist in other navies as well, it seems that the effects of this phenomenon are particularly acute in the U.S. Navy. Maybe the fact that the U.S. Navy is the largest navy in the world makes it more susceptible to internal parochialism. It is worth keeping in mind that the smallest fighting component of the U.S. Navy, the submarine force, had approximately 64,500 personnel in mid-1992. To put that into perspective, as of 1989, the British Royal Navy had a grand total of just 64,000 personnel in all its communities, the French Navy had a total of 65,000, and the entire Japanese Navy had only 44,000 personnel.[24] The submarine community of the U.S. Navy by itself is in fact larger and more powerful than most of the world's navies.

Because it is so large (with approximately 450,000 personnel) and incredibly diversified in terms of missions and capabilities, the U.S. Navy has the luxury of allowing its line officers to specialize to a greater extent than is possible in many smaller navies. Consequently, there is generally little interaction between the three warrior communities. In fact, Byron pointed out that very few American Navy

officers have much knowledge of warfare communities other than their own.[25] Some have argued that it is in the Navy's interest to increase the amount of integration in the officer career streams. But suggestions of bringing such a system to the American Navy in recent years have apparently been successfully resisted on the grounds that such a move would supposedly erode operational readiness. Submariner Admiral Kinnaird McKee explained that:

> . . . you really do want to groom a guy who is absolutely confident, so he can do whatever he has to do alone, unsupported and outnumbered. This mentality is part of a submarine crew's makeup. The day we lose that, because of people saying everyone has to be theologically balanced, is the day the submarine force loses its effectiveness. A lot of submarine officers have proved their ability to broaden themselves at the appropriate time. The fact of the matter is you don't want to bother them with that until they've gone as far as they can in the submarine force. Because the day a skipper gets worried about broadening his horizons is the day he stops being a good submarine skipper.[26]

But for all the advantages this high degree of specialization may provide, there are some serious drawbacks. It seems that the problem with specialization is that, if anything, it tends to strengthen the hold of the subcultures on the individual officer. Although these subcultures may promote internal cohesion (especially in the air and sub communities because there are relatively few platform types) and unit effectiveness, and contribute to morale, without some form of institutional restraint they can also lead to a form of warrior ethnocentrism and unhealthy rivalry. If officers can spend most of their operational careers in the submarine force, for example, what motivation do they have to care about anything other than the submarine force? In fact, they have very little incentive to do so (the implications of this "my community first"[27] mentality are examined in the next chapter). Ethnocentrism, put simply, is the belief that one's own group is superior to others. Harrison Trice provided an excellent summary of this phenomenon:

> A collectivity may come to be very emotionally attached to a set of ideologies. As a consequence, its culture will be strengthened and the collectivity will come to distrust, fear, and dislike groups with other sets of beliefs.[28]

Each community believes that it is the most important in the Navy, and this parochialism is widespread. Byron noted:

> Tribalism permeates the officer distribution system, the promotion system, and the training system; it is the basis on which we buy hardware and spend money. Community allegiance has become our faith, transcending Navy loyalty as the repository for our greatest devotion.[29]

There are a number of indicators one could use to survey the problem of parochialism, or as Byron said, "tribalism," in the U.S. Navy. When a surface navy officer wrote an article for *Proceedings* in July 1993 which questioned the sanctity of the aircraft carrier during and after the Second World War, he was later harshly criticized for "grasping at black shoe straws."[30] It is very telling indeed that almost fifty years after the end of the Second World War, American naval officers are still bickering over which platform won the Battle of the Pacific. It appears that in the eyes of many American naval officers, the "U.S. Navy" itself did not defeat the Japanese Navy, but rather its aircraft carrier or submarine communities did the job single-handedly. When one reviews a few issues of *Proceedings*, one finds many articles which strongly suggest that the future success of the Navy is completely dependent on the acquisition and maintenance of the authors' favorite platforms, be they carriers, submarines, destroyers or frigates.[31]

Another indicator that parochialism is a serious problem comes from Lieutenant Commander Paul Grossgold. He suggested that there should be more integration among the warfare communities at the operational level. Among other things, he suggested opening billets for aviators in Aegis-equipped antiair-warfare cruisers. He said:

> Let's touch on a sensitive subject. The detailer will inevitably field the question "Will I be treated fairly by a Black Shoe on my fitness report?" . . . There is always a natural tendency to resist changes to conventional wisdom. Now, more than ever, *we will all have an obligation to put our parochial concerns aside and overcome our community prejudices for the good of the order*.[32]

It is little wonder that many believe America does not have one navy, but three. No one has ever summed up the situation in the American Navy better than Byron:

> There would be no problem if the tribes fought separately. They don't. There would be no problem if each community would learn all there is worth learning from other specialties. They won't. There would be no problem if officers in jobs cutting across warfare lines could think Navy Blue. Often, they can't. Consequently, we have one Navy trying to be three navies—and largely succeeding.[33]

Officers are not encouraged to have a broad understanding of all the naval warfare specialties, thus affiliation with the warrior subcultures apparently has priority over other concerns. It should be kept in mind that cultures can have a strong impact on attitudes, even personality traits.[34] However, it must also be made clear that although culture can have a strong influence, it cannot determine behavior by itself. In the same sense that some citizens are bound to be more patriotic than others, it follows that some naval officers will be more parochial in their thinking than others. However, by the time line naval officers reach flag rank, they will probably have spent several decades in one of the warrior communities, and may very well have absorbed and internalized many of the attitudes and prejudices outlined above. It is very plausible that these factors can sometimes have a strong influence on the way the Navy's top officers make decisions within the bureaucracy.

Warriors Become Bureaucrats

Within the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, the warrior communities used to have representatives known as the Deputy Chiefs of Naval Operations for Air Warfare, Surface Warfare, and Submarine Warfare. They were the "union representatives" in headquarters. According to Francis P. Hoeber, *et al.*:

> . . . the "platform sponsors"—the CNO's deputies for air, surface, and submarine warfare . . . push their interests, adding to the general mayhem. And, of course, programs that are not linked to specific platforms have great difficulties in being brought forward, with nonacoustic antisubmarine warfare (ASW), V/STOL aircraft, and mine warfare being recent examples of navy "orphans".[35]

These "barons" competed for "resources, political position, and even flag billets."[36] Many believed that the rivalry between these three "fiefdoms" had a detrimental affect on the Navy. Over the years, there were numerous efforts to reduce the squabbling between them. In

the early 1980s, a new position was created at the three-star level called OP-095, whose main role was to look "across platforms at alternative ways of solving warfare problems,"[37] in other words, to give the CNO objective advice on which warfare programs should be pursued. It was basically an attempt to counter-balance pressures from the air, surface, and submarine barons. As Dr. Frederick Hartmann described it:

> No one wants to shut off the views of the war lords, who, after all, represent traditional and ingrained lines of authority. They represent naval surface, air, and submarine communities that develop great confidence in their own respective ways of preparing for and waging war. Members of each community wear special identifying symbols such as the submariner's dolphins or the flyers jacket. They have high regard for what their platforms and systems can do. That makes it difficult for them to appreciate what the other groups do or to accept the fact that money and resources should flow to them. This is where 095 comes in; he must determine whether enemy submarines, for example, are best fought by submarines, planes, or surface ships.[38]

Former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James Watkins said in the mid-1980s that he believed that OP-095 was beginning "to break the old bonds of parochialism."[39] However, it apparently did not succeed. In 1992, Secretary of the Navy Sean O'Keefe, declared:

> One of my primary concerns is ending rivalries and jealousies between the various warfare fighting communities in the Navy.... This Navy reorganization will begin the process of bringing our warfare fighters together into a tighter, stronger fist.[40]

Among the substantial changes in the 1992 reorganization of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations was eliminating the deputy CNO positions for air, surface, and submarine warfare and placing two-star platform barons under the Deputy CNO for Resources, Warfare Requirements and Assessment (N8). The premise for the move was that lowering the status of the union representatives would supposedly reduce their influence on decision-making.[41]

But the main issue (at least as far as creating an effective Navy is concerned) is not so much that the warrior communities had three-star representatives, or that they competed for resources. It is really a matter of controlling human behavior at the very highest level in

the organization. It was mentioned earlier that the Chief of Naval Operations (a four-star admiral) is the dominant uniformed figure in the U.S. Navy. This officer is, as McGruther put it, "The Boss" of the Navy and its most important uniformed advocate in the government. The CNO's influence in the Navy is second only to the Secretary of the Navy.[42] The responsibilities of the CNO can be summed up as follows:

> As the uniformed chief administrator of a service, the CNO is under the Secretary of the Navy, who in turn takes his orders from the Secretary of Defense. This service hat involves the CNO in the budget process; he directs procurement and recruitment to meet military needs, appoints (or recommends appointments), and convenes conferences for the Commanders in Chief. . . . The CNO makes the decisions and provides the goals.[43]

It is important to note that although the CNO is responsible for the smooth operation of the Navy as a whole, like everyone else, the CNO has preferences with regard to the kind of Navy the country should have in the future. The Navy is essentially his organization, and his warfare preferences become the Navy's preferences (although, as we shall see in the next chapter, Admiral Rickover's membership in the Atomic Energy Commission allowed him to have a great deal of influence even though he was not a CNO). It should be pointed out, however, that long-term single group dominance of a bureaucracy is not unique to the Navy, nor is the effect this can have on the direction of the organization. According to psychologists Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn, this happens in every bureaucracy:

> *The top of the organizational structure should ideally reflect the balanced composite wisdom of the system but practically it consists of specialists* who have difficulty communicating with one another or administrative generalists who lack depth of knowledge about many problems. There is often a fractionation of responsibility so that it is difficult to know who is in charge. *But the top decision-making group is limited by the values and expertise of the subsystem in which they have been trained*; for example, the engineering point of view of the former head of the production department will vary from the market orientation of the former head of sales.[44]

To put it another way, the interests of the organization's dominant group in fact become the dominant interest of the organization. Arnold Kanter said:

> Those who dominate the senior ranks not only speak for their particular intraservice component but can claim – with justice – to represent the entire service. In brief, the operative goals of a military service are what its most senior officers say they are.[45]

The "official goals" are the stated public goals of an organization. In the U.S. Navy, the official goals are basically to maintain an effective strategic deterrent, to maintain sea control, to provide a forward presence, and to project power ashore against current and foreseeable threats at any level of combat.[46] But as Charles Perrow counselled, the official goals of the organization do not necessarily coincide with the *actual* goals of the dominant community.[47] It is human nature to support and protect those institutions with which one has been affiliated for many years, particularly if the institutions have in some way contributed to one's status or self-esteem.[48] This is perhaps more common in military organizations than in the civilian world (with the possible exception of police and firefighters) because the military profession may require its members to make the ultimate sacrifice in war.

As noted earlier, line naval officers are socialized to believe that their ship or aircraft type, their symbols, and their comrades are the finest anywhere. These attachments are hard to ignore even after an officer has left the service. They are particularly intense if the officer has actually seen combat. The effects of this are reinforced in the U.S. Navy because of its size and the fact that its major warrior communities have separate career tracks. More often than not, members are not required to integrate with other specialty communities at the operational level. Although a few officers transfer from one community to another, they do not appear to be the norm in the post-war Navy.[49]

As a consequence of all these factors, most Chiefs of Naval Operations, like most other line officers, tend to have a sentimental attachment to a specific warfare community. Former CNO Admiral Zumwalt opined that this emotional linkage:

> . . . almost inevitably breeds a set of mind that tends to skew the work of even the fairest, broadest-minded commander if he is given enough time. Whichever union such a commander comes from, it is hard for him not to favor fellow members, the men he has worked with most closely, when he constructs a staff or passes out choice assignments. It is hard for him not to think first of the needs of his branch, the needs he feels most deeply, when he works up a budget. It is hard for him not to stress the capability of his arm, for he has tested it himself, when he plans an action.[50]

The end result of this is that there is sometimes a strong tendency for people at the top of the hierarchy (whom, as mentioned earlier, have almost always been aviators or submariners since the 1960s) to be less critical of their own community, and perhaps somewhat more receptive to its ambitions, especially in times of fiscal restraint (this is discussed in more detail in the next chapter). For example, Admiral Zumwalt openly admitted that he deliberately gave favorable treatment to officers from his own community in the selection for key assignments.[51] Many outside the Navy have also recognized this problem over the years, particularly in the Congress:

> A discordant parochialism was perceived by congressional and administrative critics, who alleged that three so-called unions existed in the Navy, representing respectively naval aviators, submariners, and surface ship officers. To some it appeared that the aviators, who had dominated the most senior command assignments, had not maintained a balanced outlook because of their presumed devotion to a carrier task force concept of war. Such talk prompted various journalists and Washington officials to conclude that intraservice squabbles had made suspect certain shipbuilding programs presented to the Defense Secretary or to Congress.[52]

What it all comes down to is that if faced with competing programs and limited budgets, the CNO, or indeed any corporate boss, will generally be less critical of programs that are the "most favorable to his interests."[53] In other words, submariners prefer submarines, aviators prefer carriers and aircraft, and surface ship officers prefer cruisers, destroyers or amphibious assault ships, depending on their own operational experience.[54] As Albert Bottoms noted in his discussion of the old battleship-dominated Navy, "It is quite plausible that awe, combined with professional and 'cultural' biases, obscures reality."[55] The battleship admirals were so focused on their favorite battlewagons that they simply did not want to see the strategic

potential of the aircraft carrier and the submarine. Unfortunately for the Americans at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Japanese Navy was considerably more open-minded about the offensive use of carriers. Perhaps this was so because, unlike the Americans, starting in 1927, the Japanese Navy required all its junior officers to undergo "a short course of instruction in aviation"[56] and told them that they had to serve in a naval aviation unit if they were to be considered for promotion to flag rank.[57]

Many of the American battleship admirals were clearly not interested in carriers or submarines as offensive platforms, and the Americans paid dearly for their ignorance in the early years of the Pacific campaign. At one time, the aviators and submariners were the "oppressed" communities, struggling to prove their usefulness as offensive platforms to the battleship officers who ran the Navy in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. With the impetus of civilian intervention and advances in technology, new ways of warfare became possible, and the formerly oppressed communities have since taken over the flag officer corps.[58]

The main consequence of this has been that the surface fleet has seen its bureaucratic influence decline since the early 1960s, with just two CNOs originating from their ranks (Admiral Zumwalt (1970-1974), and in the spring of 1994, Admiral Jeremy Boorda). The conventional wisdom is that one will not have much influence in an organization (or a nation for that matter) if one's group is not represented in the ruling councils. Priorities must be set, and those priorities often tend to be the priorities of the dominant group.[59] Since the 1960s, the Navy has been dominated by two highly cohesive groups, and as we will see in the next chapter, the surface navy has often suffered as a result. However, it should be made clear that the surface navy is far less cohesive than the other two because it has a greater diversity of platforms and missions, and as a consequence of this and ever-present parochialism, some elements in the surface community have suffered far more than others. In one very critical, but unglamorous, warfare specialty, the world's largest navy has become virtually dependent on smaller allies. The next chapter will examine this aspect.

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CHAPTER 4

The Black Shoes: Displaced and Disjointed

A Reversal of Fortunes

As mentioned earlier, in the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. Navy was being transformed in order to stay relevant in an age in which nuclear deterrence was the main driving force in American strategies and defense budgets. However, it should be noted that no one in the Navy seriously believed that the country no longer needed a truly general-purpose fleet capable of fighting both nuclear and limited conventional battles. The Americans built an air-centered navy unlike any other in the world. No other navy placed so much emphasis on aviation, and that remains true to this day. In the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. Navy embarked on a massive construction program for supercarriers, and these very expensive platforms required a substantial portion of the budget. Some believe that an incredible 50% of the Navy's budget during the Cold War was spent on building, supporting, and operating less than twenty carriers and their planes.[1] Indeed, between 1960 and 1970, the U.S. Navy commissioned five new supercarriers (one of them nuclear powered), was building a second nuclear carrier, and also commissioned 41 SSBNs to serve as a strategic deterrent.[2] By some estimates, nuclear submarines swallowed another 25 percent of the Navy's budget during the early 1960s.[3]

By all accounts, the surface navy was severely affected by this reorientation.[4] Some of the effects were mostly psychological. As Commander Raymond Hart noted: "For decades, the surface navy was the Navy. But then came the submariners and the aviators, slicing off groups of officers with their special insignias and their pride of specialization."[5] Sloane went into more detail:

> The birth and maturation of the aircraft as a major naval weapon system, for example, redefined the operational nucleus of the naval

> profession by superimposing all the implications of airmanship on the traditional seaman's outlook and skills. The nuclear-powered submarine created the necessity to form an elite corps of newly bred professionals, sufficiently intelligent and dedicated to learn and practice a highly complex and demanding technology. *The professional seaman naval officer, versed in the skills of going down to the sea in ships and in fighting those ships, is certainly not an anachronism, but he is no longer the obvious and exclusive backbone of the profession, either in number or status. He is rather one of a number of types of naval warfare specialists.*[6]

No longer the heart of the Navy's offensive capability, the surface navy's level of representation in the top positions in the Navy declined sharply in the post-war era. Between 1961 and early 1994, for example, just one of the CNOs (Admiral Zumwalt) was from the surface force; (of the eight others, five were aviators, and three were submariners). Considering the fact that the surface navy has more officers than the submarine community,[7] it is little wonder why the surface navy suffered morale problems. Hart felt that the surface navy had been relinquished to being merely a source of manpower for the aviation and submarine communities, and a place "to exile" those who cannot make the grade in carriers or submarines.[8]

The main reason for the reorientation, as noted earlier, was the fact that technology had allowed the carrier and then the nuclear submarine to become the optimum naval strategic platforms. Their officers took control of the bureaucracy, and for several decades, the U.S. surface combatant force (destroyers, frigates, and cruisers) was relegated to a purely "defensive" mission, protecting aircraft carriers and escorting convoys.[9] However, it is important to keep in mind that this reversal of fortunes (the transition to a purely defensive surface combatant force) was not entirely the result of a "natural evolution" in naval warfare at all. As with the revolutions which propelled aircraft carriers and submarines to the forefront of the warship hierarchy, the surface ship needed a technological coup of some sort to reclaim an offensive mission (and eventually, regain some of the influence they lost in the bureaucracy). In other words, the surface ship needed a weapon that could reach out and engage an enemy surface contact or land installation at great distances with pinpoint accuracy. The best way to do that would be to develop a

small, long-range cruise missile that could be launched from a surface warship.

Unfortunately for the surface navy there is some reason to believe that some of the senior naval aviators who dominated the Navy throughout the 1960s blocked plans to give the U.S. Navy an effective long-range cruise missile. Thomas Etzhold, a professor at the U.S. Naval War College, expounded that: "When all is said and done, its carrier fixation undoubtedly had slowed Navy exploitation of crucial new technologies–[such as] surface-to surface missiles."[10]

Two cases which would seem to support Etzhold's argument are the Navy's Regulus and Harpoon cruise missile programs. David K. Stumpf concluded that with the expensive Polaris system coming into the fleet in the 1960s (and taking money away from naval aviation), the aviators' union killed the 500-mile range Regulus nuclear cruise missile program because they feared it would divert even more funding from the aircraft programs.[11] Malcolm Muir concurred with Stumpf. He submitted that: "When aviators saw funding for both Regulus II and manned aircraft coming out of the same pocket, there was no doubt which bill would not be paid."[12] Zumwalt also placed the blame on the aviators, saying that Regulus was cancelled because of "the reluctance of the aviators' union to give up any portion of its jurisdiction".[13] This hypothesis seems to have some merit, especially when one keeps in mind that in the past many of the battleship admirals had tried to make sure that the other warfare communities could not challenge their claim to dominance in strategic missions.

Furthermore, there is also some evidence that even medium-range cruise missile programs were interfered with in the 1960s. This was confirmed by Zumwalt. Before he became CNO in 1970, Zumwalt was involved in the Navy's Harpoon anti-ship cruise missile program. He revealed that the CNO (an aviator at that time) had dismissed a request to extend the range of the proposed new missile beyond 50 miles because the aviators felt it might compete with the carriers in the anti-ship role.[14] Once again, some of the carrier admirals apparently did not want to allow surface ships to be able to take offensive action independently. This was upsetting to many surface officers especially since 1958 Soviet surface ships had been equipped with cruise missiles with ranges of up to 550 miles,[15] and the premise that the aircraft carrier should provide all the protection against

enemy cruise missiles was of little comfort for those surface ships that were not fortunate to be part of a carrier battle group.[16]

But the surface navy's problems in the 1960s were not restricted to being denied the hardware to take on an offensive role in the Navy. When the Americans decided to help the government of South Vietnam during the 1960s, the Navy sent its carriers to provide close air support. Many believe that this was not essential and that the Air Force would have been able to have done the job by itself, but apparently the air admirals believed that letting the Air Force do it alone in a major war would have diminished the importance and necessity of naval aviation. Also, some have suggested that there was a strong motivation for the air admirals to reassert their importance in the organization at a time when submariners were beginning to make gains in the flag ranks.[17] The carrier missions were an additional financial burden on the Navy, which, as in the Korean War, lost its usual share of the budget. Admiral Zumwalt maintained that:

> Not only did the Navy's share of the budget shrink during those wars because the Army and the Air Force underwent greater attrition of equipment, but under the circumstances the Navy had to put a disproportionate share of the money it did receive into maintaining its capability for power projection—its carriers and attack planes, its amphibious vessels, its ships with weapons for bombardment. Sea-control forces—anti-submarine planes and their carriers and ships suitable for patrol and escort duty—were allowed to obsolesce and, finally, retire without replacement. More damaging yet, work on future sea-control requirements—new types of ships from which planes or helicopters could operate, new techniques for combating submarines, new vessels to escort convoys, new kinds of weapons with which to fight on the surface was postponed for many years. The one exception was nuclear-powered attack submarines, which through Admiral Hyman Rickover's special influence on Capitol Hill got built in ample numbers.[18]

In other words, much of the surface fleet was starved for funds in order to satisfy the voracious appetite of the aircraft carriers for fuel, personnel, aircraft, and ammunition, and also to allow the construction of more nuclear submarines. In 1968, for example, the Navy was fighting in Vietnam, constructing two massive supercarriers and sophisticated aircraft to serve on them, and a total of 33 advanced nuclear attack submarines. Meanwhile, the only major surface

combatant ships that were being built were the under-powered, poorly-equipped and much derided *Knox*-class Destroyer Escorts (plus two frigates).[19] It is little wonder that after becoming CNO in 1970, Zumwalt, a destroyer officer, quipped: "As might be expected in a Navy that aviators had presided over for a decade, we were in good shape as far as types of planes were concerned."[20]

Professor Frederick Hartmann of the Naval War College agreed with Zumwalt's analysis, and said that under the control of aviators, "The surface fleet had suffered."[21] By the end of the 1960s, many of the surface combatant ships in the U.S. fleet were tired Second World War antiques. In the early 1970s, it was reported that in the U.S. Navy, "More than half of the surface combatants remaining in commission are over 25 years of age".[22] To put that into perspective, one should note that only about eight percent of British surface ships were that old (and like the USN, the RN had carriers and nuclear submarines), and only about one percent of the French Navy's surface force was of comparable age.[23]

Although he was diplomatic, Admiral Zumwalt placed the lion's share of the blame for the deterioration of the surface fleet on the shoulders of the three aviator admirals who preceded him as CNO:

> Internal forces in the Navy had contributed to unbalancing it in the 1960s. I no more intend to suggest that George Anderson, David McDonald, or Tom Moorer, the three aviators who preceded me as CNO, deliberately allowed the surface Navy to deteriorate than I would welcome a suggestion by them that I deliberately neglected air during my watch. . . . I am not the person to evaluate the extent of my own bias, but I think it fair to point out that following three air CNOs in a row, as I did, I was bound to have some redressing to do. Regular rotation of the top jobs among delegates from the respective unions seems to me to be a prerequisite for institutional stability.[24]

The surface navy did not have either the bureaucratic clout of the air community or a powerful independent advocate like Rickover to speak for its needs, and it became the sacrificial lamb, so to speak.[25] Although certain groups within the surface navy benefited from the naval expansion of the late 1970s and 1980s,[26] most analysts agree with Ronald O'Rourke's statement that for most of the time during

the Cold War, the surface navy had "to stand third in line for Navy resources."[27]

Fortunately, things began to improve for the surface navy in the 1980s. During the massive military buildup of the Reagan years, many in the surface warfare community felt that the reactivation and modernization of the battleships and the introduction of Aegis-equipped air defense cruisers were the beginnings of a "surface navy revolution."[28] The Soviet Navy was expanding and becoming a genuine blue-water threat, and the revitalized surface forces were needed to give the U.S. Navy a better defense against cruise missiles, and some much-needed offensive power. The Aegis cruisers would provide superior protection for the carrier battlegroups, and reactivating the battleships was less expensive than buying new destroyers.[29]

As important as these programs were to the surface navy, however, probably the single most important aspect of the revolution was the acquisition of the long-range Tomahawk cruise missile system.[30] The Tomahawk had succeeded where Regulus and, to a certain extent, the Harpoon programs had failed because unlike the other two, Tomahawk was basically forced on the Navy brass (which, as in the past, did not want anything that would threaten the budgetary sanctity of the dominant platforms) because in the early 1970s Secretary of State Henry Kissinger wanted a strong bargaining chip for dealing with the Soviets in arms control talks.[31]

With the Tomahawk missiles, (which eventually came in two versions, a longer-ranging nuclear land-attack type and a conventional anti-ship type), U.S. surface ship groups were finally capable of taking offensive action and could protect themselves from air attack with their new Aegis-equipped cruisers. With this new capability, many believed that "the surface combatant of the 1990s will probably regain much of the influence she lost to the carriers in the 1940s."[32]

But in spite of getting larger budgets and the increased prominence (if one can call it that) during the 1980s, certain surface groups did not benefit to any significant degree. Amphibious warfare, for example, did not enjoy any substantial increase in status. One U.S. Marine Corps officer speculated that amphibious warfare was neglected because few believed that it would be necessary in a war against a huge continental power like the Soviet Union. The American

naval strategic concept emphasized fighting the Soviets above all else:

> Unfortunately, amphibious operations have become increasingly difficult as the Navy has largely ignored the 'Gator' fleet, concentrating instead on updating surface combatants, submarines, and aircraft to wage naval war with the Soviet Union.[33]

Although it can be argued that the dominance of aviators and submariners has had a great deal to do with the eclipse of the post-war surface navy, it must also be pointed out that many of the problems which have afflicted the surface navy are partially because surface officers have not been able to form a unified community. Unlike the aviation and submarine communities, the surface navy is extremely diverse in terms of platforms and roles. Whereas the submarine force has only two major platforms (SSNs and SSBNs), and naval aviation consists of carriers, their aircraft and some shore-based transport and maritime patrol aircraft, the surface navy has a very broad assortment of units. In recent years, these have included tiny hydrofoils, river patrol boats, minesweepers, frigates, destroyers, cruisers (nuclear and conventional), amphibious assault ships, oilers, tenders, command ships, and battleships. It is little wonder some have complained that the surface navy is not really a community, just a huge amalgamation of general-purpose ships. One might even say that the U.S. Navy consists of an air community, a submarine community, and for lack of a more elegant phrase, "the rest of the Navy."

Because there is so much platform diversity in the surface navy, there is also a great potential for parochialism to take hold. Indeed, an officer serving in a tiny hydrofoil had little in common with an officer serving in a heavy cruiser or battleship. Without any incentive to work together, surface ship officers have often tended to identify with their platform more than with the "community" as a whole (or the Navy itself, for that matter).[34] The aviators and submariners also do this to a certain extent, but those communities have an advantage because they are more homogenous in terms of platform types. Indeed, it is interesting to note that in the early 1970s many destroyer officers felt that destroyer personnel should have their own distinctive breast insignia, identifying them not as surface navy members, but as destroyer personnel first and foremost. One senior surface officer rejected that idea because it "would tend to increase a parochial view at a time when an effort toward unifying the surface

navy is being made."[35] It seems that in the surface fleet, to a much greater extent than in the air or sub components, it is the platform, not the community itself, which counts.

Given the lack of unity in the surface navy, and given what is already known about Navy bureaucratic behavior patterns, it is very plausible that when a destroyer or cruiser officer becomes the OPNAV surface advocate (as is usually the case), the natural tendency will be to secure funding for destroyers or cruisers above all else, especially if the budget is being cut back. On these grounds, and from the discussion earlier in this chapter, it can be reasonably argued that although the surface fleet as a whole has often been the Navy's "poor cousin," some of its components will probably remain somewhat poorer than others. Some less glamorous platforms are rarely given the funding they need simply because the people that run the naval communities are usually more interested in their own ship types. There is no doubt whatsoever that the most deprived force in the entire Navy has been mine warfare.[36]

To be fair though, the Navy did build a few new minesweepers in the 1980s (the *Avenger*-class), but unfortunately, none was available when the U.S. began escorting tankers in the Persian Gulf in 1987 (and one of the tankers hit a mine).[37] Only one of them (plus three old minesweepers) were available to serve in the Persian Gulf War of 1990/1991.[38]

That war was the latest test of American naval and military prowess, and by and large, the U.S. forces were up to standard. But as in both Korea and Vietnam, the U.S. went in with an embarrassingly small MCM force (four minesweepers and six helicopters).[39] Vice Admiral Robert Kihune, former DCNO for Surface Warfare, summarized the Navy's MCM difficulties in the Persian Gulf:

> Kihune conceded that the maintenance of mine countermeasures ships and the training of the crews – at the start of the Gulf War most of the Navy's MCM ships and personnel were in the reserves – left much to be desired in the area of force readiness. "We paid a price in readiness as ships deteriorated because maintenance support was not readily available or given sufficient priority in some homeports," he said. "Training was conducted predominantly on weekends for the benefit of reserve crews, and mine warfare

training opportunities with amphibious forces and battlegroups were few and far between."[40]

There has been some discussion on surface fleet mine countermeasures over the years, but very little action. Like the Navy as a whole, the surface fleet is dominated by its largest and most powerful platforms, the cruisers and destroyers. And like most other line officers, most of the officers who dominate the surface fleet are usually more interested in their particular platforms than anything else. The major problem is the fact that while the Navy itself has been dominated by aviators and submariners, the surface component has been dominated by destroyer/cruiser officers, and:

> *It is inconceivable that they would impose additional sacrifices on their own resources in order to maintain a force of slow, wooden ships for contingency purposes only.* Because of their slowness, lack of firepower, and the continual training required to keep fantail crews sharp, wooden minesweepers are suited for little else besides a limited capability to sweep mines. The RH-53 minesweeping helicopters are even less capable, although they do have the advantage of being able to sweep into shallow water, and they risk fewer crew members.[41]

In the past, people at the highest level in the Navy have talked about these deficiencies and devised plans to redress them,[42] but the lesson of history is that these ambitious plans were just a stop-gap measure and MCM forces were inevitably allowed to shrink and become dangerously obsolete because of budgetary problems and higher priorities.

The Navy has failed to learn its MCM lessons simply because it has been dominated by partisan flag officers, most of whom did not have MCM experience, and once the memory of past mine disasters fades, so did high level support for improving the Navy's MCM capability. Since mine warfare faces a double curse of being an unglamorous small platform in a navy ruled by big platform and/or community worship, it has been the Navy's most neglected component. James L. George argued that this may not necessarily be the case in the future since the U.S. Navy has undergone a significant change in strategic direction as a result of the 1992 Navy White Paper... *From the Sea*.[43] However, it is my contention that it will take more than a change in strategic concept to bring balance to the U.S. Navy. More on that in the next two chapters.

NOTES

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3. Captain Dominic A. Paolucci, U.S. Navy (ret.), "The Development of Navy Strategic Offensive and Defensive Systems," *Naval Review 1970* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1970), p. 217.
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5. Commander Raymond J. Hart, U.S. Navy, "Surface Warfare Officers: The Need for Professionalism," *Proceedings*, June 1976, p. 39.
6. Commander Stephen B. Sloane, U.S. Navy, "Professionalism: A Broader Perspective," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. XXX, No. 4, Spring 1978, p. 44 (emphasis added).
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8. Hart, op. cit. in note 5, p. 39.
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14. Ibid., pp. 81, 64.
15. Krepon, op. cit. in note 1, p. 360.
16. John W. Finney, "Dreadnought or Dinosaur?" *The New York Times Magazine*, 18 January 1976, p. 31.
17. See Arnold Kanter, *Defense Politics: A Budgetary Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 111; also Finney, op. cit. in note 16, p. 7.
18. Zumwalt, op. cit. in note 13, p. 63.
19. "Naval and Maritime Events," *Naval Review* 1968 (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1968), p. 275. Norman Polmar notes that some of the *Knox*-class Destroyer Escorts were cancelled to pay for nuclear submarine cost overruns. See his book, *The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1984), p. 171.
20. Zumwalt, op. cit. in note 13, p. 77.
21. Frederick H. Hartmann, *Naval Renaissance: The U.S. Navy in the 1980s* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990), p. 14.
22. Raymond V.B. Blackman, *Jane's Fighting Ships 1971/72* (London: Jane's, 1972), p. 449.
23. Ibid., pp. 342-59, 111-18.
24. Zumwalt, op. cit. in note 13, pp. 63-64.
25. Scott C. Truver, "Whither the Revolution at Sea?" *Proceedings*, December 1988, p. 74.
26. M.D. Mulquin, "AEGIS: Combat System for Battle Group Defense," *Naval Forces*, No. 4, 1982, pp. 40-45; John E. Ogden, "The Surface Force Renaissance," *Proceedings*, October 1985, pp. 103-06; James D. Hessman, "Aegis: The End of the Beginning," *Sea Power*, January 1983, pp. 12-23; and Paul Stillwell, et al., "Surface Warfare and Surface Warriors," *Proceedings*, October 1985, pp. 65-80.

27. Ronald O'Rourke, "The Future of the U.S. Navy," in Joel Sokolsky and Joseph Jockel, eds., *Fifty Years of Canada-United States Defense Cooperation: The Road from Ogdensburg* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), p. 315; see also Truver, op. cit. in note 25, pp. 68-74.

28. Commander Powell A. Fraser, U.S. Navy, "The Out and Down Revolutions," *Proceedings*, December 1988, p. 53.

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37. Michael Willrich and Jon Cohen, "Mine Shaft," *The New Republic*, 4 February 1991, p. 16.

38. David Steigman, "The USS Avenger (MCM-1)," *Naval Forces*, No. 2, 1992, p. 80.

39. Willrich and Cohen, op. cit. in note 37, pp. 16-18.

40. Edgar L. Prina, "Navy Moves to All Ahead Flank in Mine Warfare," *Sea Power*, May 1992, p. 28.

41. Lieutenant James M. McCoy, U.S. Navy, "Mine Countermeasures: Who's Fooling Whom?" *Proceedings*, July 1975, p. 40 (emphasis added).

42. See, for example James D. Hessman and Vincent C. Thomas, Jr., "An Interview with Admiral Watkins," *Sea Power*, October 1982, pp. 29-30; and "U.S. mine projects hit by new roles, cuts," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 15 May 1993, p. 15.

43. George, op. cit. in note 7, p. 179; "U.S. Navy exercises its new MCM capability," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 1 May 1993, p. 12; John Boatman, "U.S. MCM needs more pace, urges report," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 22 January 1994, p. 12.

CHAPTER 5

. . . From the Sea: The Black Shoes Strike Back?

Full About: A Change in Course

> The World has changed dramatically in the last two years, and America's national security policy has also changed. As a result, the priorities of the Navy and Marine Corps have shifted, leading to this broad assessment of the future direction of our Naval Forces. . . . Our strategy has shifted from a focus on a global threat to a focus on regional challenges and opportunities.
>
> -. . . *From the Sea*, 1992[1]

When the Soviet Union collapsed a few years ago, the United States found itself in a situation that in some ways was not unlike that which confronted it at the end of the Second World War. In both instances, the only serious rivals to American military hegemony disintegrated, and left the U.S. as the world's only superpower. The Soviet nuclear threat has rapidly diminished in the last few years, as has its once great blue-water navy. The Americans are now once again put in a position in which their mighty navy is figuratively "all dressed up but with nowhere to go." Without the threat of either nuclear or conventional war with the Soviet Union, what is the U.S. Navy to do? As in the past, such a change in the international system has profound implications for Navy force levels and strategic concept.[2]

As with the end of the Second World War, the end of the Cold War meant a massive downsizing of the American military. After the Persian Gulf conflict ended (a war in which the Navy played second fiddle to the Air Force),[3] the Navy was faced with massive cutbacks. According to former CNO Admiral Frank Kelso: ". . . we are looking at about 450 ships by the time we reach the 1995 budget, roughly about 100 ships from where we are today."[4] The Navy was also slated to lose 25 percent of its active personnel.[5] It now appears that further cuts will reduce the U.S. Navy to about 330 ships by the end of the century.[6] Admiral Kelso stated that the diminished threat from the

Soviet Union made the armed forces, including the Navy, a prime target for budget cuts:

> Economic pressures around the world provide an even greater push to draw down the size of military forces. This is certainly true in the United States. Because the threat has changed so radically it is not enough for the U.S. Navy to miniaturize, to take the same forces we had to fight a blue-water global war and reduce the numbers. We must look at where and what threats are likely to emerge in the future and adjust our forces accordingly. Clearly many of those threats are in the littoral regions.[7]

The last sentence is the key to the change in U.S. naval doctrine. Since the late 1940s, the U.S. Navy's primary task was to prepare to fight the Soviet Union if necessary, using either conventional or nuclear weapons. By the 1970s, the Soviet Union was certainly a great blue-water naval power, but its real strength was its massive army. Also, the Soviets had an advantage over the Americans because they would not have to cross an ocean if they had wanted to wage a conventional war on NATO in Europe. In order to counter these Soviet advantages, the Americans maintained an extremely large navy which, above all else, had two vital purposes: to provide a strategic deterrent, and to secure full command of the seas. The American Navy retained its traditional "big ship" philosophy in the Cold War years, emphasizing offensive blue-water operations over brown-water ones. But with the Soviet Union now defunct, the Navy had to reorient its strategic concept to fit the times. If it did not, the Navy's long-term well-being as a fighting arm would become increasingly doubtful.

The change of strategic concept came in the fall of 1992. The Navy/Marine Corps White Paper . . . *From the Sea* stipulated that in the future the U.S Navy would, to a certain extent, "deemphasize" its traditional high priority missions such as strategic deterrence and control of the high seas, and "concentrate more on capabilities in the complex operating environment of the 'littoral' or coastlines of the Earth."[8] To put it another way, the strategic concept of the U.S. Navy changed from preparing to wage global war on the high seas with another great power to preparing for more limited conflicts in third world countries. This means that the blue-water Navy would have to improve its brown-water capabilities, which among other things, means more integration with the Marine Corps.[9]

In addition to the new emphasis on littoral warfare, the Navy and the other services are now emphasizing joint operations. Since 1992, the Navy has set up a new acquisitions policy which evaluates the abilities of new platforms to contribute to joint operations with the Marines, the Army, or the Air Force. Highest priority is given to the platforms which can best demonstrate their interoperability with the other services. To put it another way, the more flexible and multi-purpose the platform, the better its chances will be for purchase.[10]

The question that must now be asked is how will this change of strategic concept (from blue-water superpower confrontation to littoral warfare in the third world) and the new emphasis on jointness affect the various parochial naval communities and specialties. As we saw at the end of the Second World War, advances in weapons technology and competition from the more popular Army Air Force forced the Navy to rapidly abandon its old battleship warfare culture in order to survive. Aviators and submariners came to dominate the flag ranks because their platforms were believed to be the most appropriate for dealing with the Soviet Union. It is still too early to say what the full extent of the reorientation will be, but based on past changes, or "revolutions" in the U.S. Navy, one can make some educated guesses.

In March 1993, an article by Breemer provided a short summary of what many people believe lies ahead for the U.S. Navy's SSNs now that the Cold War is over:

> It is rumored among some of those who follow naval affairs that the submarine has outlived its usefulness--not because some new technology has finally made the surface of the oceans transparent, but because the submarines' primary mission: anti-submarine warfare (ASW) against the Soviet underwater fleet, is said to be "overtaken" by "events" thanks to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The new focal point of Post-Cold War U.S. naval planning is joint littoral operations from the sea. The Navy's White Paper stops short of telling the submariners that their unique capabilities are no longer needed, but it takes little reading between the lines to realize that the underwater service faces an uncertain future. . .[11]

It would seem that these recent changes "will most affect the U.S. attack submarine (SSN) force."[12] The submarine community is

headed for some very rough waters and will likely fall from power in the naval bureaucracy.

There are also indications that many of the U.S. Navy's aviation programs are "in serious trouble."[13] But despite the fact that naval aviation is experiencing cancellations and delays, the aircraft carriers themselves have managed to get through the downsizing relatively unscathed. From a high of 14 carriers in the late 1980s, the Navy must now make do with 12 (eleven are for deployment, one is a training ship). And it should be noted that the two ships it lost were old and relatively small carriers that were on their last legs anyway.[14] It seems that the supercarriers, which many have criticized over the years for being too big and expensive, may perhaps still be quite useful[15] because their enormous size allows them the flexibility to serve as launching platforms for amphibious assaults on coastal areas while still retaining a large air wing to provide cover.

Although it appears that the supercarrier will continue to be an important U.S. naval platform,[16] it is also clear that its unquestioned importance is not what it once was. This statement is confirmed in the wording of . . . *From The Sea*:

> The answer to every situation may not be a carrier battlegroup. It may be an amphibious ready group and a surface action group with Tomahawk missiles. It may be a group of minesweepers with several guided missile frigates for defense. Or it may be the overwhelming power of a carrier battle group and an amphibious ready group with embarked Marines, operating with the Air Force and Army.[17]

At this point, it seems fair to say that the brown shoes are probably not going to have the same predominance in the Navy that they have enjoyed since the end of the Second World War. A large, and very costly nuclear submarine force is going to be a hard sell when the threat of superpower nuclear confrontation is almost nil and the Navy has committed itself to littoral warfare and joint operations. Things are not so bad for the supercarriers, but as noted above, these platforms probably will not be utilized as much in the future as they have in the past. Given the new focus on fighting in shallow, coastal waters, it seems that the greatest beneficiaries will be the black shoe surface fleet, and, particularly, some of its traditional "stepchildren."

Surface Forces: All Ahead Full

> The Gulf War did reveal deficiencies in our naval operations. In common with Earnest Will (the Kuwaiti convoying operation) and recent operations off Syria and Lebanon, Desert Storm required that American ships operate close to shore, sometimes in mineable waters. In these situations the Navy has used oceangoing men-of-war to fight in shallow waters, primarily because deep-draft ships are what we have. Now, with the Soviet Union gone, our concentration on control of the high seas will recede to an extent. In turn, more emphasis will probably be placed on the ability to operate inshore, including minesweeping capability. . . . If there is going to be a shift of attention to inshore areas, we will need more of an inshore Navy.
>
> - Admiral William J. Crowe, 1993[18]

With the change of strategic concept, many believe that the surface navy will see a great boost, both in terms of procurement and modernization, and in terms of status as naval warriors. The amphibious forces (known as "the Gators") and mine warfare will probably benefit more than any other aspect of the fleet. There are plans to integrate amphibious surface groups with the carrier battle groups. This will help the "Gator" navy, which has long suffered from obsolescence, declining numbers of ships, "outdated command and control systems, and a chronic shortage of lift for Marine Corps landing forces."[19] As one "Gator" posited:

> The era of the blue-water Navy is ended. . . . Naval Warfare will be littoral (or expeditionary) warfare. . . . Force levels are going down . . . but amphibious forces have a wide and diverse constituency including the various Commanders-in-Chief and the Congress, so while the total number of amphibious ships will go down with the rest of the force, the percentage of the force that is amphibious will increase.[20]

However, a better amphibious force will need a better mine countermeasures force to accompany it into battle.[21] Admiral Crowe noted that "the reason we did not mount an amphibious operation against Kuwait during the Gulf War was primarily the mine threat."[22] Fortunately though, there is some reason to believe that the long-suffering U.S. mine warfare force will gain under the new strategic concept. In January 1992, the head of surface warfare insisted "we no longer want to be dependent upon anybody" to protect U.S. ships from mines.[23] But by far the most important change has been the

reorganization of Mine Warfare Command. Rear Admiral John Pearson, Commander of Mine Warfare Command, indicated that prior to the reorganization:

> The forces were divided up under five type commanders, and we didn't have the capability for a deployable command staff or staffs that would work with forces and then deploy with them. So you didn't have much in the way of integrated mine warfare training and a readily deployable mine warfare task group. This reorganization is the first major step that we will take to improve our mine warfare capability.[24]

Now, a single flag officer controls all elements of mine warfare.[25] Money has also been freed up to invest in mine warfare research and development, and Rear Admiral Pearson reported that "there is evidence at every level of senior navy leadership that funding has to be increased to support correction of the deficiencies that exist."[26] Mine warfare funding increased in fiscal year 1992, and many predict even more funding in the years to come.[27] It would seem that the long struggle to make the Navy leadership more aware of the requirements of mine warfare may be paying off thanks to the new emphasis on littoral warfare, and more importantly, as will be explained in the next chapter, the change of strategic direction could help to integrate mine warfare skills into the rest of the line officer corps.

Although the amphibious and mine warfare components are perhaps the most visible beneficiaries of the new strategic concept, other surface ships may also benefit. O'Rourke noted that the modernization of the Navy's cruisers and destroyers during the late 1970s and 1980s (and the acquisition of Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles) may prove to be quite useful in littoral warfare.[28] It was noted earlier that the Navy White Paper does indeed foresee using surface ship groups as substitutes for carrier battlegroups in the future.

The question that must now be pondered is what will the happen to the naval bureaucracy as a result of the change of strategic concept? It seems fair to say that unless something changes radically, the submarine community is probably not going to be as powerful as it was when the Soviet threat was at its peak. The aviators are probably somewhat better off because the large deck carriers are able to accommodate amphibious forces, but they are expensive to build

and maintain. Certain aviation specialties, especially those related to ASW, are being cut back or are being allowed to become obsolete. Although the threat from the Soviet submarine force is now almost nonexistent, many worry that these boats are being sold to third world states who may not be friendly to American interests (such as Iran and North Korea), and there may come a day when the Navy might have to deal with these submarines in a regional conflict for which it will be underequipped.

This leaves the black shoe surface navy. What is its future? If current trends hold, it seems reasonable to forecast that, like the aviators and submariners before them, the change in the strategic concept of the Navy will allow greater promotion opportunities for surface ship officers. It may not be a coincidence that the first CNO of this era, Admiral Boorda, is a surface officer (destroyers), and, unlike most other surface officers, early in his career he actually served in minesweepers. He is the first surface navy officer to be appointed to that post since 1970. In the past, changes in the Navy's strategic concept have resulted in changes in the composition in the Navy's flag officer corps. It is quite obvious that the U.S. Navy has begun to change course, and in all likelihood, the surface navy seems about to regain some of the prestige it lost when aircraft and nuclear-powered submarines came along.[29] Time will tell. The issue which remains is: will a surface navy dominated bureaucracy be any different from one dominated by submariners or aviators? I shall offer a tentative answer to that question in the next chapter.

NOTES

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8. O'Keefe, op. cit. in note 1, p. 3; John D. Morrocco, "U.S. Navy Reorients to Coastal Warfare," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 22 March 1993, pp. 56-57; L. Edgar Prina, "From the Sea: Enabling Strategy for Navy, USMC," *Sea Power*, November 1992, pp. 19-21; Commander C.P. Mott, U.S. Navy, "Naval Forces After . . . From the Sea," *Proceedings*, September 1993, pp. 44-46.

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22. Crowe, op. cit. in note 18, p. 326.

23. Corddry, op. cit. in note 9, p. 11.

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26. Thomas, op. cit. in note 24, p. 13.

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CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The U.S. Navy has undergone dramatic transformations over the last 50 years. In that time, it has gone from a force dominated by battleships and surface ship admirals, to dominance by carriers and aviator admirals, and, finally, to dominance by submarines and admirals from the silent service. During the Cold War, aviators and submariners ran the bureaucracy, and generally nurtured and protected their respective communities. This is understandable because the naval communities are not truly integrated. The current system encourages prejudice and jealousy within the officer corps. In the words of one officer:

> We are all naval officers. Yet we allow the insignia on our breast to claim our primary loyalty. We confuse where we go to work with what work is. And we ignore our comrades at arms. The only useful solution is a new kind of C(3): communication, coordination, and cooperation among all three warfare specialties. Naval officers are isolated from the other communities at nearly every career step. Hence, ignorance and mistrust of each other are to be expected. The billet structure completely restricts the access of one community to another.[1]

No matter which community dominates the bureaucracy, some groups simply do not get the attention or the funding necessary to fulfil their role. Battleship admirals ignored the potential of the submarine and the aircraft carrier, and likewise, admirals from those two communities often ignored the surface navy when it was their turn to run the corporation.

The Navy's strategic concept changed recently from an anti-Soviet orientation based on strategic deterrence and command of the high seas to one based on joint operations in the littorals. Based on past revolutions, there is reason to believe that surface ship officers will gain ascendancy in the bureaucracy in the decades to come because their platforms are the most appropriate (multipurpose and relatively

inexpensive) to meet the requirements of the new strategic concept (assuming there is no radical change in the international system). Certain surface specialties, particularly mine warfare and amphibious warfare, seem most likely to benefit.

The new strategic concept could help encourage more of the Navy's best young surface officers to spend time in mine warfare, and that could help in the long run. If anything, the White Paper's suggestion that the Navy should integrate minesweeper and destroyer groups for overseas deployments may help to unify the surface navy. This will be necessary if the Navy is going to be well-balanced in the future.

It should be pointed out, however, that changing the strategic concept and emphasizing jointness will not in itself bring more balance to the U.S. Navy. These changes will probably help certain specialties (particularly those in the surface fleet), but at what expense? Will the SSN fleet, for instance, be allowed to shrink and become obsolete if the submarine community loses its predominance in OPNAV in favor of surface ship officers? Will the submarine community be denied the funding for research and development to counter new threats from the third world? If this happens, will the Navy be unprepared to fight submarines in the future as it was unprepared to deal with mines in the past? When one reviews the post-war U.S. naval evolution, the answers to these questions could very well be yes.

The emphasis on littoral warfare is sensible, but giving priority to naval platforms which are the most helpful to the other branches of the armed forces may limit the Navy's ability to conduct missions that *only* the Navy can do, such as submarine warfare. No one in the Navy honestly believes the submarine is obsolete. Perhaps the best option for building a well-balanced Navy in the future would be to gradually place *less* emphasis on jointness with the other services and more on trying to resolve its internal rivalries. In other words, the Navy should be more concerned with solving internecine problems before trying to overcome interservice rivalries.

As far as the surface component is concerned, it might be worthwhile to offer significantly enhanced promotion opportunities to those who have occupied *senior* officer billets in Mine Warfare Command. If the Navy were to enact such a policy, it would probably

help to ensure that mine countermeasures forces will no longer be a castaway, but an integral and vital component in the new navy.

It is also clear that there should be more interaction between the surface component and the air and submarine components. This could be done by making a one or two year tour in another community a firm requirement for future four-star officers. Such a move could help to nullify parochialism without harming combat readiness. Skeptics will undoubtedly claim that there simply is no time to fit an extra tour in the career progression system, but that is not really the case in many instances. It is well known that many career-minded officers seek out non-warfare related tours, including serving as an Admiral's Aide or Executive Assistant, as a means of improving their chances for promotion. These tours do nothing to add to their proficiency as warriors, but they are coveted because of their perceived status as "career-builders." If the Navy were to set a date by which time all new four-star admirals must have experience in at least two communities, it can be argued that the most ambitious officers will indeed sacrifice these non-warfare tours in favor of serving in another community.

In other words, the idea is to ensure that all senior flag officers have direct knowledge and experience in more than one community to help prevent the subcultures and platform-worship from exerting too much partisan influence. This, it would seem, is the best option for the U.S. Navy, especially now that defense spending is headed downward and partisan bickering is at its worst. It is far easier to change policies and integrate the career paths of future flag officers than it is to overcome intense loyalty to a subunit or warfare platform. If the Navy is at all serious about reforming itself and giving the country the best, most capable Navy possible, today's admirals and civilian leaders should give such suggestions serious consideration.

NOTE

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